

Minutes of the 20th Meeting of the
Housing Committee under the
Sixth Term of Wong Tai Sin District Council

Date: 22 August 2023 (Tuesday)
Time: 2:30 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, 6/F, Lung Cheung Office Block,
138 Lung Cheung Road, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon

Present:

Vice Chairman:

Ms. TAM Heung-man, Mandy WTSDC Member

Member:

Mr. LIU Sing-lee WTSDC Member

In Attendance:

Mr. LAU Hak-keung, Eric Senior Executive Officer (District Council) WTSDO
(Acting)

Mr. LI Yick-man, Eric Structural Engineer/C5-3 BD

Mr. YIP Raymond Senior Health Inspector Joint Office
(District Joint Office) Kowloon 5 (BD/FEHD)

Ms. LEUNG Bik-san Senior Housing Manager/WTT1 HD

Representatives of Government Department in Attendance for Agenda Items III(vi) and
III(vii)

Mr. IP Wai-pun Chief Health Inspector (Wong Tai Sin) 1 FEHD

Ms. CHOI Pui-chi Senior Health Inspector FEHD
(Cleansing & Pest Control) Wong Tai Sin

Ms. CHAU Wing-san Health Inspector
(Pest Control) Wong Tai Sin

Representatives of Government Department in Attendance for Agenda Items III(vi)

Ms. LAM Pui-shan Housing Manager/WTT2 HD

Secretary:

Miss TIN Tsz-huen, Charis Executive Officer (District Council) 5 WTSDO

Welcoming Remarks by the Vice Chairman

The Vice Chairman welcomed all to the 20h meeting of the Housing Committee (HC) under Wong Tai Sin District Council (WTSDC).

Confirmation of Agenda

2. Members had no comment on the agenda. The agenda was confirmed.

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the 19th Meeting of the Housing Committee under Wong Tai Sin District Council held on 27 June 2023

3. Members had no comment on the minutes of the meeting. The minutes were confirmed.

II. Progress Report of the 19th Meeting of the Housing Committee under Wong Tai Sin District Council
(WTSDC HC Paper No. 31/2023)

4. Members noted the Paper.

III (i) Report on Unauthorised Building Works in Wong Tai Sin
(WTSDC HC Paper No. 32/2023)

5. Mr. LI Yick-man, Eric from the Buildings Department (BD) presented the Paper.

6. Mr. LIU Sing-lee said that according to the report, there had been about 200 unauthorised building works (UBWs) in the district since January 2020. He also pointed out that with the number of outstanding orders and number of prosecutions both being 18 in the Central Area, BD had already launched prosecutions regarding all the outstanding orders. However, as both the South West Area and the North Area were showing more outstanding orders than prosecutions, Mr. LIU enquired whether BD would consider launching prosecutions regarding the rest of the outstanding orders.

7. Mr. LI Yick-man, Eric from BD responded that the number of outstanding orders stated in the report had included unprosecuted cases, therefore the number of prosecutions could be lower than the number of outstanding orders. The Department would review the follow-up on cases with outstanding orders in a timely manner and launch prosecutions in accordance with the prescribed procedures.

8. The Vice Chairman said that there had been two incidents of concrete or rendering falling from the outer walls of buildings in San Po Kong this month, and these incidents involved failure to comply with Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme Notice. She believed that BD had not taken the corresponding enforcement action regarding the notices and orders issued, and the Secretary for Development had also admitted during a media session that the Government had repeatedly extended compliance deadlines. And if owners still failed to comply despite extension of the building inspection deadline, it might take half a year, or even years, for prosecution to follow. She pointed out that the Housing Committee had requested BD to expedite matters regarding the removal of UBWs in the past, but there was no significant improvement. BD must speed up prosecutions and proactively follow up on cases in order to avoid deaths or injuries caused by accidents.

9. Mr. LIU Sing-lee said it was stated in the report that since January 2020, there were had been 193 UBWs in the district and 88 of them involved outstanding orders. He enquired whether BD would set up key performance indicators and a timetable regarding the removal of such UBWs.

10. Mr. LI Yick-man, Eric from BD responded that the Department would determine its enforcement priority based on the established principles and follow up on

UBWs with outstanding orders through large scale operations. The Department would also prosecute non-compliant owners repeatedly.

11. Mr. LIU Sing-lee added that BD should accord priority to UBWs involving outstanding removal orders and potential danger to the public to prevent accidents.

12. Members noted the paper.

III (ii) Investigation Report on Water Seepage Complaints in Wong Tai Sin
(WTSDC HC Paper No. 33/2023)

13. Mr. YIP Raymond from the Joint Office (JO) presented the Paper.

14. Mr. LIU Sing-lee said he had pointed out at the last meeting that Tin Keung area and Tsui Chuk & Pang Ching area saw more water seepage cases because the structural problems of the buildings there had caused water seepage and troubled the residents as the pipes deteriorated. He had also suggested at the last meeting that the government department concerned should consider providing subsidy for owners of subsidised housing to replace the old sewage systems. He asked whether JO had relayed his views to the headquarters since the previous meeting.

15. Mr. YIP Raymond from JO replied that he had already relayed Member's suggestion to JO during an internal meeting this month and the Office had noted Member's views.

16. The Vice Chairman said that residents of Lung Poon Court were also faced with the same problem. She believed that cooperation between the Housing Department (HD) and JO alone was not enough to solve the water seepage problem at its root, and other departments such as the independent checking unit (ICU) of the Housing Bureau and the Water Supplies Department (WSD) also played crucial roles. She pointed out that if water seepage was suspected to be a result of damages to the exposed pipes of buildings built by HD or the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA), ICU should follow up; if the case was found to involve leaky water supply pipes, WSD should follow up. She continued that ICU's lackadaisical attitude in handling water seepage cases and repeated refusals to attend HC meetings had slowed down the progress of such cases. She also pointed out that the prevailing procedures for handling water seepage cases were cumbersome and the departments should be

restructured so that ICU and the relevant sections of WSD would be put under JO to improve case handling efficiency.

17. Mr. YIP Raymond from JO responded that if the water seepage was suspected to have noted from damaged exposed pipes of buildings built by HD or HA, JO would refer the case to ICU. He said that the Office would regularly review the existing procedures and methods for handling water seepage cases and the Government would make public the details in due course.

18. The Vice Chairman asked when JO would announce the results of the said review.

19. Mr. YIP Raymond from JO replied that senior government officials had proposed in a Legislative Council meeting last month to combine Stages II and III of the investigation on a trial basis, to test whether the investigation time required for applicable cases could be reduced by 30% from 90 to around 60 working days. JO would also review the procedures for checking the results of onsite investigations in order to further shorten the investigation time.

20. The Vice Chairman learned that a political party had engaged a contractor to help residents of flats affected by water seepage identify the seepage source, and the water seepage sources were found in a month. She opined that JO should speed up its investigations.

21. Mr. YIP Raymond from JO replied that the Office was already reviewing the relevant procedures and would make public the latest arrangements in due course. He added that the time required for investigations largely depended on the complexity of the case and whether the owners of the relevant flats were cooperative.

22. The Vice Chairman hoped that JO could share with the headquarters how the political party had handled water seepage cases and draw reference from the technologies and equipment employed so as to make investigations more efficient.

23. Mr. LIU Sing-lee requested JO to prepare a summary report about the water seepage complaints in the district since 2020 and set out in it information such as the total numbers of complaints received and notices issued, the work that had been done and the issues to be dealt with for Member's reference. He also asked the other departments in attendance to submit summary reports on the issues under their

respective purviews.

24. The Vice Chairman requested the departments in attendance to submit such reports to the Secretariat after the meeting.

25. Members noted the Paper.

III (iii) Housing Matters Discussed at Meetings of Area Committees
(WTSDC HC Paper No. 34/2023)

26. Mr. LIU Sing-lee said that the Area Committees had not submitted the relevant reports in the past, and he hoped that they would report to HC of the next-term WTSDC on the housing issues discussed at Area Committee meetings.

27. Mr. LAU Hak-keung, Eric from the Wong Tai Sin District Office said that he would relay Members' views to the Area Committees via the secretaries of Area Committees.

28. Members noted the Paper.

III (iv) Enforcement Action against Illegal Parking
(WTSDC HC Paper No. 35/2023)

29. The Vice Chairman welcomed Ms. LEUNG Bik-san, acting Senior Housing Manager/WTT1 from HD, who attended the meeting for the first time.

30. Ms. LEUNG Bik-san from HD presented the Paper.

31. Mr. LIU Sing-lee pointed out that illegal parking was quite common in five housing estates in the district, namely Tsz Ching Estate, Tsz Lok Estate, Choi Wan (I) Estate, Choi Hung Estate and Lok Fu Estate, through inspecting these housing estates in recent years, Members had learned that the frequent illegal parking there was a result of various structural reasons, such as environmental factors. He said that with over 100 000 warning notices issued by HD in the past four years, the administration cost incurred was quite substantial. He hoped that HD could propose and detail a plan for improvement in its summary report and thereby enhance cost-effectiveness. He

recalled that some former HC members had made a wide range of suggestions, such as setting up smart lampposts near illegal parking black spots in housing estates, increasing manpower for issuing fixed penalty tickets, raising the fine for fixed penalty tickets and so on. He wished that HD could earnestly consider Members' suggestions.

32. Ms. LEUNG Bik-san from HD replied that in addition to the road management efforts in housing estates during office hours, the Department would also arrange for staff to take surprise enforcement actions during non-office hours, such as impounding illegally parked vehicles and issuing fixed penalty tickets in order to manage the estate roads and passages effectively. Furthermore, she pointed out that the feasibility of introducing smart lampposts in housing estates depended on various factors, and the fine for fixed penalty tickets was not decided by HD, who must act in accordance with the prevailing legislations.

33. The Vice Chairman said in summary that the illegal parking in public housing estates required regular follow-up and hoped that the next-term WTSDC would continue discussing the matter.

34. Members noted the Paper.

III (v) Request for an update from Housing Department representatives on the installation of automated teller machines in Lung Poon Court Commercial Centre
(WTSDC HC Paper No. 36/2023)

35. The Vice Chairman presented the Paper.

36. Ms. LEUNG Bik-san from HD responded that following HD's unsuccessful tender exercise for automated teller machines (ATMs) in Lung Poon Court Commercial Centre which ended on 14 April 2023, the Commercial Properties Management Unit (CPMU) had repeatedly contacted the relevant banks but no positive responses had been received by the end of May. Therefore, there was no need to conduct another tender exercise. Meanwhile, phase 2 of Kai Chuen Shopping Centre was still under construction and was expected to be completed between late 2023 and early 2024. CPMU of HD had conducted a study and concluded that the 240-square-metre shop G28 on the ground floor of the shopping centre was suitable for providing various banking services, which in principle included 24-hour ATM service. As such, a public

tender has been held from 11 August to 1 September 2023. As for the 30-square-metre shop and the 180-square-metre shop mentioned previously, if CPMU confirmed that they would be used for providing banking services, the tendering exercise should commence after the completion of the one for the aforementioned shop G28.

37. The Vice Chairman hoped that HD would report to Members via the Secretariat the latest progress of the tendering exercises regarding phase 2 of Kai Chuen Shopping Centre.

38. Mr. LIU Sing-lee believed that banks would incline to set up ATMs in newly built shopping centres out of business considerations. He suggested that HD might invite tenders for ATMs in Kai Chuen Shopping Centre and Lung Poon Court Commercial Centre as a bundle and incorporate extra service requirements so that the successful tenderer must set up ATMs in both shopping centres. Such measure might tackle problems stemming from the absence of ATMs in Lung Poon Court Commercial Centre.

39. Ms. LEUNG Bik-san from HD responded that she believed banks would consider a wide range of factors when setting up ATMs in shopping centres of housing developments and adding extra restrictions might put them off submitting tenders.

40. The Vice Chairman said that HD could relay Members' suggestions to the banks and find out whether they would accept such terms.

41. Ms. LEUNG Bik-san from HD replied that she would relay Members' suggestions to HD's CPMU.

III (vi) Request for responses from representatives of the Housing Department and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department regarding rodent prevention and control in the public rental housing estates in the district
(WTSDC HC Paper No. 37/2023)

42. The Vice Chairman welcomed Mr. IP Wai-pun, Chief Health Inspector (Wong Tai Sin)¹, Ms. CHOI Pui-chi, Senior Health Inspector (Cleansing & Pest Control) Wong Tai Sin and Ms. CHAU Wing-san, Health Inspector (Pest Control) Wong Tai Sin of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), as well as Ms. LAM Pui-shan, Housing Manager/WTT² of HD, who attended the meeting for this

agenda item.

43. The Vice Chairman presented the Paper.

44. Ms. LAM Pui-shan from HD responded that regarding the follow-up on the rat Hepatitis E virus (HEV) case in Tsz Ching Estate, the Department had been, in addition to the actions reported at the last meeting, taking a series of measures throughout July and August to strengthen the cleansing and rodent prevention in the estate. During that time, no rats had been spotted by estate staff and there had been no complaints or captures of rodents. The estate office had all along been working closely with FEHD and had conducted multiple joint inspections in July and August to review the effectiveness of the rodent prevention work. Besides the existing anti-rodent measures, the staff of Tsz Ching Estate had also introduced a night patrol team since July this year as a precautionary measure. The patrol team, which consisted of staff well versed in rodent prevention, patrolled the hygiene blackspots every night to monitor the estate's hygiene. Furthermore, the estate staff had installed rodent proof meshes at suitable public locations and procured new rodent traps such as T-shaped bait boxes. There were also plans to introduce cameras for tracking rodents. When the HEV case in Tsz Ching Estate was discovered in May, HD immediately took a series of follow-up actions to tackle rodent infestation and there had been no new HEV cases in Tsz Ching Estate ever since. HD would keep monitoring the situation and improving the environmental hygiene of housing estates.

45. Ms. CHAU Wing-san from FEHD responded that the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health was still investigating the case. Subsequent to FEHD's follow-up measures in and around Tsz Ching Estate in May and June 2023, the pest control section of the Wong Tai Sin District Environmental Hygiene Office (WTSDEHO) had continued strengthening such measures in July and August. Apart from conducting inspections with HD staff regarding the rodent infestation situation in Tsz Ching Estate (including Ching Tai House) in order to offer professional advice and technical guidance, WTSDEHO had also held publicity activities about rodent prevention such as distributing leaflets and posters to the residents and staff of the estate to more effectively prevent and tackle rodent infestation. At the same time, WTSDEHO was also experimenting with new anti-rodent strategies such as the trial use of Ekomille in FEHD's refuse collection points and markets to better eliminate rodents.

46. Mr. LIU Sing-lee said that having been following the rodent infestation

situation in public housing estates in the past three years, HC could tell that FEHD and HD had strived to tackle rodent infestation. He was impressed by the efforts of the two departments. He requested FEHD and HD to submit a summary report on the environmental hygiene of public housing estates, and pointed out that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Committee (FEHC) of the next-term WTSDC should follow up on the issue of rodent infestation.

47. The Vice Chairman thanked FEHD and HD for their strenuous efforts in improving environmental hygiene in public housing estates. She also pointed out that while the rodent infestation problem had been alleviated, the departments should still work hard to eradicate rodent infestation.

III (vi) Request for an update from the Housing Department and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department on mosquito control in the public rental housing estates in Wong Tai Sin in response to concerns over the unusually early upsurge of mosquito surveillance indices in recent months
(WTSDC HC Paper No. 38/2023)

48. The Vice Chairman presented the Paper.

49. Ms. CHAU Wing-san from FEHD replied that among the four survey areas in Wong Tai Sin District, two recorded gravidtrap indices above the alert level of 20% in June. Most of the gravidtraps concerned were located in public and private residential areas, schools, leisure facilities and public places. WTSDEHO's staff had, together with the relevant government departments including HD and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, immediately acted on it by inspecting the venues with the management staff concerned to intensively eliminate potential mosquito breeding grounds, providing them with advice and technical support, and helping them to quickly formulate and implement effective anti-mosquito measures such as regularly killing adult mosquitoes through ultra-low volume fogging operations. With the concerted efforts of various parties, the gravidtrap indices of the four survey areas in Wong Tai Sin had dropped to level 2 in July. WTSDEHO would continue monitoring the mosquito situation in the district and keep enhancing its work on mosquito prevention and control in the areas under its purview. Furthermore, the third phase of the Anti-mosquito Campaign had commenced on 7 August 2023 and would last until 27 October 2023. WTSDEHO's staff would keep strengthening their publicity on mosquito

control in public housing estates in order to spread the anti-mosquito message to residents and stakeholders so that their awareness of mosquito prevention and control could be raised. Specific measures included holding anti-mosquito seminars for management staff and residents of housing estates, distributing to them leaflets and posters, as well as introducing them to mosquito prevention measures such as regular inspection of homes and the surroundings; eliminating potential mosquito breeding grounds; changing water in vases, scrubbing their inner surfaces and removing water in saucers under potted plants at least once a week; tightly covering water containers; and ensuring that air-conditioner drip trays were free of stagnant water. WTSDEHO would continue to work closely with HD to prevent and tackle mosquito infestation in public places and public housing estates.

50. Ms. LEUNG Bik-san from HD responded that regarding the gravidtrap index of Wong Tai Sin Central in June being slightly too high, HD had inspected Upper Wong Tai Sin Estate, Lower Wong Tai Sin (II) Estate, Shatin Pass Estate and Tung Wui Estate with FEHD to review the effectiveness of the mosquito control work as well as look for and follow up on any room for improvement. HD had been cooperative in FEHD's Anti-mosquito Campaign by carrying out mosquito control in a targeted manner. Following the completion of the first and second phases of the Campaign, the third phase had commenced on 7 August 2023. Routine mosquito prevention and control measures taken by estate offices included inspections of areas prone to mosquito breeding in housing estates for making improvements. Examples of such improvements included levelling uneven ground surfaces, clearing away old furniture and sundries as quickly as possible by hiring extra grab lorry services to ensure cleanliness of refuse chambers and junk collection points, removing stagnant water from the top of canopies and covered pedestrian walkways, checking whether the tapes on keyholes of manhole covers had come off, removing dead leaves from drainage channels to keep them clear, trimming shrubs on slopes and weeds on roadside, as well as inspecting small containers which collected water in housing estates, such as soft drink cans, meal boxes, tree holes, flowerpot bottoms and discarded tyres. In addition to the routine anti-mosquito measures above, estate offices would also carry out fogging in the scrubby areas within a 100-metre radius around residences every week to kill adult mosquitoes. Pest control service contractors had also been hired for additional targeted mosquito prevention and control services in places with high gravidtrap indices. Estate offices had also instructed their staff to regularly apply larvicide oil and sand to manholes and surface channels, change the larvicide powder in mosquito traps and properly maintain mosquito traps. HD would continue to install or replace different types of mosquito trapping devices in estates as necessary for more effective

mosquito control. According to the information provided by FEHD, the gravidtrap indices of Wong Tai Sin District had decreased in July, reflecting that the effect of the mosquito prevention and control work was beginning to show. HD would keep a close watch on the gravidtrap indices, continue to intensify its supervision of the contractors' mosquito prevention and control work, and send staff to attend the regular inter-departmental anti-mosquito task force meetings held by FEHD to sharpen their knowledge in mosquito control. Joint inspections of public places in housing estates with FEHD and other stakeholders would also continue so as to review mosquito control effectiveness and seek improvement. HD would step up its publicity on mosquito control and call on residents and other stakeholders to take proper mosquito prevention measures through posters and leaflets about mosquito prevention/dengue fever as well as the Facebook page of HA.

51. Mr. LIU Sing-lee pointed out that the mosquito infestation in the district, though rather severe in the past, had already shown marked improvement. He expressed his appreciation for the efforts of FEHD and HD in mosquito prevention and control in public housing estates and hoped that the department could keep up the good work. He asked FEHD and HD to submit a summary report on the mosquito prevention and control work in public housing estates over the past three years, and said that mosquito infestation should be followed up by FEHC of the next-term WTSDC.

52. The Vice Chairman was glad to learn that the mosquito prevention and control work of FEHD and HD had been quite effective. She thanked FEHD for joining hands with HD in many inspections of housing estates and providing HD with professional advice and technical guidance.

IV. Any Other Business

Date of the Next Meeting

53. The Vice Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Stating that this meeting would be the final HC meeting of the current-term WTSDC, she thanked all Members and government department representatives for their contributions over the past four years and wished them all the best in their work.

54. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Wong Tai Sin District Council Secretariat
September 2023

Ref. No: HAD WTSDC 13-15/5/5 Pt.16